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Does the USSR Really Support International Terrorism?

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Approximately one week after Ronald Reagan was inaugurated as President of the United States, Secretary of State Alexander Haig, in his first press conference on January 28, affirmed that the Soviet Union is "involved in conscious policies which foster, support and expand international terrorism." National Security adviser Richard V. Allen has also stated that there is "ample evidence" of Soviet support for terrorism.

These statements by high-level government officials represent perhaps the first time that the United States government has officially accused the Soviet Union of supporting international terrorism. The evidence for this involvement is not new, however.

As long ago as 1975, Brian Crozier, director of the Institute for the Study of Conflict in London, testified before the Senate Internal Security subcommittee that the Soviets were deeply involved in the support for and training of terrorist cadres throughout the world.

Robert Moss, John Barron, and Miles Copeland, to name but a few, are among the many prominent and respected journalists who have developed compelling evidence in the last 10 years of Soviet involvement over a lengthy period of time. More recently, Samuel T. Francis has summarized and analyzed this evidence in a monograph entitled *The Soviet Strategy of Terror*, published early this year by the Heritage Foundation, Herbert Romerstein, in a monograph just published, *Soviet Support for International Terrorism*, also presents evidence for the allegation, based on both Soviet and terrorist primary sources.

Finally, Claire Sterling, an internationally respected journalist, has recently published *The Terror Network*, which shows in massive detail the role of the KGB and other Soviet or

Yet, for some reason, the thesis that the Soviets support terrorism remains controversial. Although much of the evidence was available to the mass media throughout the 1970s, there was virtually no discussion of the Soviet role in major newspapers in this period. One reason for this black-out was purely ideological.

Both liberals as well as some government officials wished to promote detente with the Soviet Union. A basic assumption of detente was that the USSR is no longer a serious "revolutionary force," that it has matured into a "great power" which

has responsible international commitments and goals and is no longer pursuing the goal of Marxist destabilization and revolution.

Of course, conservatives were all along skeptical of detente and of these claims for the Soviet Union. Long before the Soviet invasion of Afghanistan, we were pointing out the discrepancies between the carefully cultivated image of the Soviet Union as a "responsible power" in the West and the brutal realities of Soviet behavior.

Soviet assistance to North Vietnamese aggression in Indochina, the escalation of Soviet espionage efforts against the United States, Soviet and Cuban military involvement in southern Africa and the Horn of Africa, the Soviet military and naval buildup, reported Soviet violations of SALT I, and even the repetition of aggressive themes and slogans by Soviet leaders—all these were ignored or covered up or explained away by the proponents of detente, but were continually exposed and emphasized by conservative foreign policy spokesmen.

Because liberals and the far left exhibit a strong tendency toward "peace at any price" and were enthusiastic about "an end to the Cold War," they often refused to look at the evidence or to consider its implications. Because

in previous administrations had a vested political interest in the policy of detente, the U.S. government itself refused to deal with what was becoming a serious threat to national security.

Instead of recognizing and responding to the growing Soviet threat, we entered into a decade of withdrawal and restrictions on our own intelligence services and foreign policymaking capacities.

The Church and Pike committees investigated our intelligence services and created a "black legend" of the CIA as "a rogue elephant out of control," in the words of former Sen. Frank Church. The Levi guidelines on domestic security investigations for the FBI, restrictive executive orders for the CIA and other parts of the intelligence community, the expanded Freedom of Information Act and the Privacy Act, the Foreign Intelligence Surveillance Act of 1978, internal dissension and demoralization in the intelligence community itself, and the collapse of the internal security apparatus in the executive and legislative branches and at many local law enforcement levels as well—all these undermined our ability even to know about and analyze, let alone respond effectively to, the dangers of Soviet military escalation, covert action, espionage, terrorism and propaganda.

Of course, the proponents of detente cannot admit that the Soviets support terrorism. To admit this well-documented fact would imply that the Soviets are actively engaged in promoting violent revolutionary attacks on Western society—in other words, that the Soviet Union is not a "mature" or "responsible" power eager to become an established member of the international community.

Yet it is also true, on one level, that the Soviets do want to be accepted by the other responsible states of the West. The Kremlin desires respectability as well as the